

Dreams come true

By Alberto Lunetta
Signature Staff



Italian Navy Ens. Daniela Giordano, the first Italian female Navy pilot.

Photo by PH2 Damon J. Moritz

About a month ago, an historic change took place in the *Marina Militare Italiana* (Italian Navy) pilot community. For the first time, a commissioned female military pilot was assigned to an Italian Naval base. In December 2002, twenty-six year old *Guardiamarina* (En-

sign) Daniela Giordano made Italian military aviation history as she reported at the *Maristaeli* Helicopter Navy Base near Catania.

The news has drawn public and media attention inside and outside Italy because of her pioneering role in the Italian military world. She became the first female naval aviator in the history of Italy.

Giordano's "dream" of flying military aircraft came true in October 20, 1999 as the Italian Parliament passed a law that allowed women to join the military.

This important shift marked a drastic change in the

Pilot page 8

The War Eagles head home

By Lt. Ian Hawley
Contributing writer

The VP-16 War Eagles have completed their six month deployment to the Mediterranean based out of NAS Sigonella, Sicily, NSA Souda Bay, Crete, and most recently added, NS Rota, Spain. Starting on Feb. 1, the War Eagles will begin to head home to their base in Jacksonville, Fla. and into the waiting arms of families and friends.

After arriving in Sigonella and Souda Bay on Aug. 1, the War Eagles spread their wings and assumed the watch over the Med for departing squadron VP-10. The War Eagles quickly set their mark of excellence, flying missions in support of operations in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

They were instrumental in providing support to troops on the ground, stopping the spread of crime and smuggling and locating war criminals. Aircrews took commanders of both regions flying to show them the support we provided and improve communication.

From Souda Bay and Sigonella, the War Eagles also flew missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Many hours were flown all over the Mediterranean tracking shipping and suspected smuggling operations.

The War Eagles were directly involved in the intercepts of ships that were providing support to terrorist organizations, including Al Qaeda. These missions were so important that a permanent detachment was kept in Souda Bay, Crete, to provide greater Eastern Mediterranean coverage and support U.S. entering or exiting the Suez Canal.

Another mission of great importance was the escort of U.S. ships transiting through the Strait of Gibraltar. Initially flown from NAS Sigonella, these missions provided armed support of U.S. shipping. Recently, these missions were shifted to NS Rota, Spain, giving the War Eagles even greater flexibility and the ability to provide more support at reduced notice.

On top of all this activity, the War Eagles also participated in joint exercises all across Europe, flying from England, Norway, Germany, Spain, Iceland, Italy, Greece, and Turkey. Even with the busy operational schedule, the War Eagles got involved in the community and supported a holiday party and provided repair assistance.

The War Eagles have been very busy and have enjoyed their time in Italy, Crete, and Spain, but it is time for another squadron to assume the watch and so we wish all the friends we have made all over a very fond farewell.

AIMD's change of charge

Below: departing officer in charge Cmdr. Michael Rivenbark delivers his remarks during the ceremony in which AIMD Sigonella became its own command.
Right: The men and women of AIMD stand at attention during the ceremony.



Photos by PH2 Damon J. Moritz

Why we Fought New museum in Catania brings the history of WWII in Sicily to life

By JO1 Craig Coleman
Signature Staff

In July of 1943 they came in waves. Bombers and fighter-bombers of the American 7th and British 8th Armies, under the leadership of Lt. Gen. George S. Patton and Field Marshal Bernard L. Montgomery, dropped their deadly munitions on the ports and garrisons of western Sicily.

The bombing accomplished the goal of drawing German defenders to the western shores when the real invasion targets of *Operation Husky* were the southern and eastern coastlines of the island. The attack commenced on July 10, and the liberation of Sicily began.

The province of Catania recently commemorated World War II and the eventual defeat of the Axis powers with the opening of a new museum dedicated to the Allied victory in Sicily.

Museo Storico dello Sbarco in Sicilia (Historical Museum of the Landing in Sicily) is located in central Catania near the railroad station and the port in a renovated industrial building that dates back to the war years.

It consists of two floors of exhibits, photographs, period art and newsreel footage designed to give a modern audience an understanding of the military forces at work in Sicily during the summer of '43, the logistical and combat difficulties faced by the two forces and the human cost to the civilian Sicilian population.



Unexploded ordnance lies in the street next to a house destroyed by bombs. Visitors enter this display after leaving a simulated Sicilian bomb shelter.

Photo by JO1 Craig Coleman

The first exhibit of the museum features a detailed recreation of the main square of a typical Sicilian village.

It is in many ways reminiscent of small-town America during the same period, showing life as Norman Rockwell might have seen it had he been born in Sicily. At first glance it looks much like the villages we can visit today.

On closer inspection details of the German occupation begin to surface, a Nazi propaganda poster, pro-fascist literature in one of the homes.

Museum page 8

Farewell, from 72nd Secretary of the Navy

In leaving this wonderful institution, I am reminded that we in the naval service are heirs to 227 years of history in which sailors and marines live and perpetuate our most cherished treasure patriotic duty to America. To all the men and women in this great service, military and civilian alike, you personify a tireless American spirit that finds hope on every new horizon.

Your service to America's purpose and security is as vital as ever. Today, we face an unprecedented array of difficult and dangerous challenges around the world. Following our strong president, Americans everywhere are rising to this historic moment using diplomatic, financial, humanitarian, and, when necessary, our military might to protect and advance human dignity and freedom.

Everyday when I walk into my office, three paintings constantly remind me of the life of consequence that you have chosen. On one wall is a rendition of USS Constitution - Old Ironsides - engaged in the U.S. navy's first major victory at sea in the war of 1812. When I look up from my desk, I see fleet Adm. Chester Nimitz standing on the deck of USS Missouri as if he is carefully watching the decisions made in this office.

Finally, behind my desk is a painting that depicts brave marines and the navy corpsman raising the American flag at Iwo Jima.

Coincidentally, my office faces the Iwo Jima memorial. Felix de Weldon, the memorial's renowned sculptor, best captured our nation's challenges and the Americans who rise to meet them when he said, "fortunately for this great nation of ours, we have been blessed through heritage and tradition by a limited number of great men, thus far adequate in numbers to our nation's needs in time of great stress." His words still ring true today for those who wear the cloth of the nation and the two strong leaders of this department, the chief of naval operations, Adm. Vern Clark and the new commandant of the marine corps, Gen. Mike Hagee. With them in your vanguard, Adm. Clark and Gen. Hagee are shining champions who deal hope for all of us. This team tradition is the lasting legacy of Adm. Clark and Gen. Jim Jones, Gen. Hagee's predecessor. From old ironides to enduring freedom, brave Americans never rest in defending our ideals, principles, and values.

For that noble duty, I thank you. As your spirit is tireless, my gratitude is timeless. I will worry about you when you face danger and I will salute you when you prevail. I will marvel at your achievements and I will gain strength from your example. But after all is said and done, when I take my leave on Jan. 23, I will miss you. God bless you and your families, God bless the department of the Navy and God bless America.

Signed,
Honorable Gordon R. England, Secretary of the Navy

Hometown Weather

Melissa Aguilar, MWR
Los Feliz, CA



High 80°F - Low 56°F
Partly Cloudy



Direct Line

Capt. Tim Davison
NASSIG
Commanding Officer

In last week’s Direct Line, I wrote on alignment, which is one of the CNO’s Top Five Priorities. This week, I want to follow that up with another one his priorities - manpower.

Adm. Clark said, “Manpower is, and will remain, our Navy’s biggest challenge. We are at war for people and we are fighting this war on three fronts, recruiting the right people, raising retention and attacking attrition. To win, we need the involvement of every leader at every level, from admirals to third class petty officers and seamen, everyone who has Sailors working for them. All of you directly affect our success on this issue, through your own personal actions and through your chain of command.”

He went on to say, “we must create an environment that offers opportunities, encourages participation, and is conducive to personal and professional growth. We must expand our efforts to improve Sailor and civilian quality of service by ensuring work is tied directly to combat readiness and professional development. Now more than ever, we must recruit and retain the best and the brightest, despite the reality and strains of increased OPTEMPO. This is the first time in history that our Navy has faced a prolonged conflict with an all-volunteer force, and we must protect the integrity of our Fleet.”

I think at all levels of this command that we must look towards our deckplate Sailors. We must nurture them and develop their skills in the workplace. Good working skills and attitudes will better serve your division, department and the command. We must keep their minds in tuned with what their specific task is to get the job done. Their training is essential to the overall success of the base and what we do to support the fleet.

Under the CNO’s Task Force Excel Initiative, a new website, Navy Knowledge Online is now up and operating. This new web portal is specifically made to help our Sailors by pointing out their opportunities and career decisions. It demonstrates the topdown commitment to our Sailor’s personal growth and development; this new capability has the potential to improve communication and education of all our Shipmates. In addition, it includes the five Vector Career Model, which spotlights professional development, personal development, leadership, certifications and qualifications and finally, performance of your individual career. You can tailor it to meet your needs and to grow as a Sailor. You can logon to it at www.nko.navy.mil.

We must also keep their bodies in good physical condition to help during times of stress. We are directed to work out at least three times a week. I know it is hard to get out of the office, but it is an absolute must. We have to keep in shape in order to carry out our duties every day.

LPOs, chiefs, division officers and department heads must all take a unique leadership role in the development of their Sailors. Our Sailors must look at us for the guidance they need to develop into the Sailors that will stay Navy. We need everyone on the base to encourage each other to become better at what we do.

Keep charging and let’s all stay Navy.

Military, civilian W-2s available now on myPay

By Bryan Hubbard
 Defense Finance and Accounting
 Service Public Affairs

ARLINGTON, Va. (NNS) – American military members and Department of Defense civilians can now view, save and print their W-2s from “MyPay” (<https://emss.dfas.mil/mypay.asp>).

Military retirees and annuitants can view, save and print their 1099s, as well.

MyPay provides a secure, convenient way for members of America’s armed forces, defense civilians, military retirees and annuitants to manage their pay account information. Available around the clock, customers can make changes online that previously needed to be made standing in line.

Customers can also help the Department of Defense save money by volunteering to turn off the print copy of their Leave and Earnings Statements (LES) and checking it online. The Defense Department can save up to 34 cents for each LES that is delivered electronically instead of in hard copy.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service is the world’s largest finance and accounting operation. In fiscal 2002, DFAS paid 5.7 million people, processed more than 11 million contractor invoices, made 7.3 million travel payments and disbursed more than \$346 billion while reducing overall costs to customers by \$144 million.

CMC Says

CMDCM(SW/AW) Anthony Evangelista
NASSIG
Command Master Chief



Where can you go for assistance when you are new to a duty station? Who can help while your spouse is deployed? How can you find out which resources are available to you as a Navy family member? The answer: your Navy Ombudsman!

Spouses of active duty or reserve service members, Ombudsmen volunteers are trained to serve as your family advocate.

Your Ombudsman is a link between you and the command. We can not do it without them here at NASSIG. Our command and department relationships are vital to overall productivity and effectiveness of the base. We depend on our Ombudsmen to help pass the word and keep everyone informed.

Your Ombudsman is knowledgeable about the Navy and this command. Take advantage of their knowledge to get the assistance you need.

Your Ombudsman can:

- Serve as a command representative
- Represent you to the command
- Know the best sources to assist you with most situations
- Are on call for emergencies 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Disseminate information from the command to you
- Focus on your morale and welfare
- Provide counseling referrals
- Assist you during personal or command crises
- Remind you to keep paperwork up-to-date, such as DEERS, your spouse’s will, and Page 2 information.

Though your local Ombudsmen are not professional counselors, they do have the training and resources to direct you to the right people and organizations that can help you. If you do not know whom your command Ombudsmen is, please call the NASSIG Fleet Family Support Center at 624-4291.

The NASSIG Fleet Family Support Center offers a wide range of programs and information that include:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Family Advocacy Program | Sexual Assault Victim Intervention |
| Youth and Parent Support | FFSC Clinical (Counseling) Division |
| Command Briefings | New Parent Support Program |
| Community Services Division | Relocation Assistance |
| Inter-Cultural Relations (ICR) | Spouse Employment Asst. Program |
| Transition Assistance | Personal Financial Mgmt. Program |
| Ombudsman Program | Information and Referral |

The Ombudsman Program and the Fleet Family Support Center are here to help you and your family during your tour at NAS Sigonella!

Medals and Core Values; Related?



By Chaplain
Richard Townes
Command Chaplain

On Feb. 4, 1919 by an act of Congress, two of the Navy’s highest awards were established.

The Navy Cross and Distinguished Service Medal were created to decorate those service members who went above and beyond what was expected of them.

These medals honor the actions of Sailors and officers who dramatically stand out from among their peers.

The Navy Cross is awarded to those who exhibit extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force, while the Distinguished Service Medal is awarded for exceptionally meritorious service to the U. S. Government in a duty of great responsibility.

bility.

The Navy Cross and Distinguished Service Medal are not handed out like candy.

I’ve only known a few people who have worn them. When I was an enlisted man over 20 years ago I was introduced to one man who wore both medals and two more who wore the Distinguished Service Medal.

Of the thousands of people I met during one three year hitch, I met only a couple who wore these decorations. These specific men were not only men of courage, but also men of honor and commitment.

They were people who acted very bravely and responsibly at the important moments in their lives because they believed in always acting that way, especially during the less important times.

The Navy has developed its core

values of courage, honor and commitment for a reason. They are not merely words, they are a way of life.

Honor, courage, and commitment are expected of us because they are how the rest of the world defines our service.

My hope is that each Sailor here at NAS Sigonella will put these principles into action in their daily lives and all tasks assigned.

My hope is that every Sailor on this base who dons our wonderful Navy uniform will think about how he or she can exemplify these core values.

Who knows, if you begin today to really live as an honorable Sailor who is committed to courage, then maybe one day others will say about you, “At Sigonella, I knew a sailor who wore the Navy Cross and Distinguished Service Medal.”

Liturgical services to resume

By JO1 Craig Coleman
Signature Staff

The NASSIG Chaplains Department recently announced the resumption of Liturgical Protestant services Feb. 2 at 9 a.m. in the NAS II Chapel.

According to Lt. Richard Townes, Chaplain, Liturgical services are more structured worship services practiced by most protestant denominations that baptize babies, including Episcopalians, Methodists, Lutherans and

Presbyterians.

It has been nearly two years since the base chapel last offered liturgical services, so Townes is starting them anew. “The (NAS II) chapel has enough room for about 45 people,” Townes said. “But we’re hoping to outgrow it real soon.”

Townes, who is new to the Chaplain’s Corps, will conduct the service in a way that acknowledges the history of the liturgy while remaining contemporary. “We’ll try to keep an eye on the traditional but in a more modern setting.”

The Pulse

Exercise the safe way

Article courtesy of USNH, Sigonella

As everyone knows, January is the time to start that exercise program you’ve been putting off. Resolutions are made to ‘get in shape’ for those spring and summer fashions. Unfortunately, those resolutions are frequently forgotten. Here are seven tips for exercise that will help you continue your program safely and successfully.

1. Always wear appropriate safety gear. This includes items such as helmets, pads, and appropriate shoes for your selected sport.

2. Warm-up before you exercise. ‘Cold’ or un-stretched muscles pose a higher risk for injury during the period of activity.

3. Exercise at least 30 minutes daily. This can be broken up into shorter periods of 10 to 15 minute sessions during the day.

4. Follow the 10 percent rule. Never increase your program more than 10 percent a week. So, increasing your distance if running or walking, or increasing your resistance if weight-lifting more than this may cause injury.

5. Try not to do the same routine two days in a row. Varying your program will work different muscles, as well as keep boredom away.

6. When using exercise equipment, read directions. If you need help, ask someone qualified. Check treadmills and other equipment to make sure it is in good working order before beginning.

7. Stop exercising if you experience severe pain or swelling. Discomfort that persists should always be evaluated.

This information was gathered from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons. More information is available at: www.cpsc.gov

SECURITY BLOTTER



CRIME STOPPER'S HOTLINE

624-6389

Jan. 21 - Jan. 26

The following incidents were reported and categorized as follows:

- Traffic accidents without injuries - 13
- Traffic accident with injuries - 1
- Car break-ins - 4
- DUI - 0
- DUI's 2003 - 6
- DUI's 2002 - 35

Counselor's Corner

Getting Ready for the Chief's Board

Don’t wait for Chief Board results- order your microfiche today! Visit www.bupersaccess.navy.mil to order your fiche. Once you receive it, the Retention Center has a microfiche reader for you to view it. “Where do I send a FITREP/Eval that is missing or incorrect?” The answer is, Notify Commander, Navy Personnel Command, Pers-311, 5720 Integrity Drive, Millington, TN 38055-3110, by letter, giving the period of the report (FROM and TO dates) and the name of the reporting senior. Enclose a copy of the PSR with corrections marked and a copy of the report, if available.

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NAVY NEWS

Award more than personal recognition to pilot

By David McKee
Naval Station San Diego Public Affairs

LEMOORE, Calif. (NNS) – One of the most visibly impressive marks of a military career is a chest full of medals.

Awards embody military tradition, signifying places, battles, competence and bravery.

To honor actions above and beyond the call of duty in aerial combat, the Navy presents the Distinguished Flying Cross.

For Distinguished Flying Cross recipient Lt. Andrew P. Hayes of Elgin, Ill., the rewards of performing honorably go beyond the medal he wears on his uniform.

"A lot of it has to do with being in the right place at the right time," said Hayes. "A lot of guys in my squadron would have done the same thing if they were in the same place I was."

On what began as a routine flight one night, Hayes' aircraft launched from the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71).

The Roosevelt battle group was underway in the North Arabian Sea, supporting coalition efforts in Afghanistan.

It seemed as if an uneventful mission lay ahead. Things changed, however, when Hayes spotted a large mass of Taliban tanks and other armored vehicles three kilometers from a U.S. special operations unit.

Hayes knew he had to do something to protect the U.S. troops' position. When he directed his attacks, he chose the flank closest to the friendly troops, driving the enemy away.

Although fuel was low and he was under enemy anti-aircraft and small arms fire, Hayes continued to direct attacks and track the enemy's position.

Six hours later, with the mission completed, 25 tanks and armored vehicles lay destroyed and enemy ground forces had been routed away, crippling the Taliban's ability to attack.

"The bigger accomplishment was saving American lives on the ground. It was Americans helping Americans. It was my job to make sure they were safe while they continued their mission," Hayes said.

One year later, he is now with the "Flying Eagles" of Fighter Attack Squadron (VFA) 122, based in Lemoore, Calif. He is an instructor now, and his award is more than a personal achievement. It serves as a model of inspiration for students who will one day "be in the right place at the right time."

"While the Distinguished Flying Cross is an award for individual courage, and this recognition is important, it is the effect it has on the morale of the pilots and other aircraft personnel that I appreciate the most," said Hayes.

The award has only been given to a handful of pilots in the war on Afghanistan. But to Hayes, the Distinguished Flying Cross does not represent his own personal valor, because he was not alone. He says it is about the guys on the ground. They are the ones who were "truly in harm's way."

Hayes said, "At the end of the day, I go to a comfortable room and a shower. But the guys on the ground are without comfort when they perform their service to their country."

Recap SIG CORNER



Why is there a wall in front of the Commissary-Exchange?

When the building was designed, the Commissary-Exchange met all Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP) criteria and included windows from the shops onto a covered walkway. When the AT/FP criteria changed, we had to choose between installing a blast wall and setting the parking 25 meters from the building.

Separating the building from the parking by 25 meters would mean a longer walk into the store and less parking. As a base, we chose the shorter walk and more parking, and accepted the blast wall to protect our families from fragmentation and line of sight fire. It still seems to be the best compromise.

How SIG 2.3 Affects You: Halsey Road, the road in front of the Commissary/Exchange at NAS 1, will continue to be under construction with one lane traffic from the fire station to Sherman Drive by the CDC and bowling alley until the end of February.

If you have any questions about the SIG 2.3 construction, contact LT Darren Hale at haled@nassig.sicily.navy.mil.

News Briefs

EE Bonds Holding Change

The Department of Treasury recently announced that the minimum holding period for Series EE and I bonds has been increased from six to 12 months as of Feb. 1. This change means people who purchase EE or I bonds on or after Feb. 1 must wait one year before they may redeem those bonds. People who purchase bonds will receive a notification of this new policy with their bonds until the pre-printed bond stock that incorrectly states the previous holding period is used up. More information is available at <http://www.savingsbonds.gov>.

Singled Out

Coming in February MWR will be hosting "Singled Out," the spin off of MTV's "Singled Out" at Live Wire on Feb. 7 with the replay on AFN on Feb. 14. Applications will be available for single Sailors ages 18 to 30 (male and female) and can be picked up at Take 5 and must be turned in by Feb. 3. DJ Sleepy will be playing the music while Angel Labron hosts the show.

Financial Manager Opening

The Comptroller Dept. has an opening for a financial manager. Applicants must obtain a secret security clearance, this is an emergency-essential position. Closes Feb. 4. For details, call HRO at 624-6681 or 624-6688.

Technician Needed

U.S. Naval Hospital Sigonella is looking for candidates in the local area who are qualified as medical lab technician, medical technologist or phlebotomist. Call Mrs. Randazzo at 624-3792 or email Arandazzo@sig.med.navy.mil.

Hospital Nurse Needed

U.S. Naval Hospital Sigonella is soliciting for full and part-time personalized service contract for an emergency room registered nurse. The closing date is Feb. 23, sources must be eligible for U.S. employment and U.S. Board certified. Solicitation packages are available at the Supply Dept. purchasing office at NAS II. Call Mrs. Saladino at 624-5723 or Mrs. Randazzo at 624-3792.

Dental Looking for Assistants

The Branch Dental Clinic has two positions available for contract full-time dental assistants. Applicants must be U.S. citizens and qualified dental assistants. For additional information, call DTC Pinkas at 624-4205 no later than Feb. 14.

Identity theft leaves Naples Sailor picking up pieces

By JO1 Joseph Kane
NSA Naples PAO

NAPLES, Italy (NNS) – Imagine coming home from a trip to find out all your money is gone, your bank accounts empty, your credit in ruins. Worse than all that, a warrant has been issued for your arrest, and any routine traffic stop could land you in jail. You've now become a victim of identity theft.

This may sound like a fictional scenario used to educate people about the dangers of not safeguarding their I.D. cards, but it actually happened to one Naples Sailor.

Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Heather Warick of Naval Support Activity Naples' photo lab spoke of how her whole life changed two years ago, when she lost her driver's license shortly before deploying to the Western Pacific.

Since the driver's license was about to expire, she didn't worry about it too much. Six months later, she returned home to find out someone had been using her name to open credit card accounts, steal her savings and commit fraud in several states on the West Coast.

"Everything I had saved while I was on deployment was gone," she said. "I went back to the bank to get copies of my statements. The locations of the withdrawals were nowhere near where I

had been, and I told the bank that I hadn't touched my accounts. I was devastated."

Warick said the bank then put a special coded password on her account to stop any future theft, but it was already too late. Virtually everything she had was already stolen. That was two years ago.

"It's been a long two years," she explained. "I had to take leave and try and find out what I could do. I went to legal, and they advised me to get copies of my credit report."

Up until then, I had a very high credit rating. Then I found out that the thief had opened credit card accounts in my name. So I had to contact all those credit card companies and send them a letter from my ship showing the dates we were out to sea to verify that I was not accountable for the misuse of the credit cards."

At this point, the victimized Sailor still didn't know the full extent of the crimes that had been committed in her name. A few days later, while she was still on leave and visiting her family, she got an unexpected telephone call.

"I answered the phone and the voice asked me if I was sitting down,"

said the Sailor. "The guy said he was from the Portland, Oregon, police and that I was the victim of identity theft. In addition to the stuff I already knew about, he said my name had been used in many crimes in Oregon, Washington and near the Canadian border, including stealing a car and crashing it."

The woman who had committed the crimes had more than 12 aliases and still has not been caught. Warick said the officer then informed her that the case was being turned over to the FBI for investigation, and she would be called to testify when the thief had been caught.

"I had no idea about what had been going on," she said. "And even though I didn't have to pay for the credit card bills she ran up, I still lost all the money from my bank accounts. Plus, if I had been stopped for a traffic violation or anything like that, I would have been thrown into prison because my name had several warrants for arrest issued; and, because of all the felonies she had committed, I would have been considered dangerous until they finally figured out that it wasn't me."

She said the worst part of it all has been trying to correct all the problems that are now associated with her

name. Everything from credit cards to bank accounts to criminal records have to be looked at and questioned. And, it's not over yet.

"Just knowing that she hasn't been caught yet is really hard," she said. "I know that at any time, there is the possibility that she could use my name for whatever she wants. Until this person is caught, I can't ever completely clear my name, because there could always be more crimes. So I just have to keep checking on my accounts."

She exclaims that she is much more aware of things and takes precautions to protect herself.

"It's little things that I see all the time," she commented. "I watch Sailors who leave their I.D. cards sitting out, or throw out mail that has their name and address on it. These are the things that can be used to commit crimes."

Typical things that get thrown in the trash that have account numbers, Social Security numbers, and other information you might not think about should be shredded or burned. There are people out there who go through trash to get that kind of information. Then all they have to do is go online, and they can find out all they need to know about you."

CNO addresses NSA Bahrain in recent visit



Photo by PHT Brian Ano

Central Command Area of Responsibility (Jan. 16, 2003) — Adm. Vern Clark, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), speaks with Sailors and Marines assigned to Naval Support Activity, Bahrain. "Be ready," he said, repeating the President's orders to the military regarding the ongoing worldwide war on terrorism.

Capt. Hamby visits NCTS

Jan. 17 marked a special day for NCTS Sicily as the command welcomed a visit by Commanding Officer, NCTAMS EURCENT. NCTAMS EURCENT serves as the parent command for NCTS Sicily. Capt. Hamby is a native of Medina, Ohio, who has served in a wide variety of duties starting her career as a computer systems analyst, Washington DC to Commanding Officer, NCTS Jacksonville, Florida.

NCTS Sicily provided Captain Hamby multiple tours of various workstations and facilities ranging from the COMSTA (Headquarters, BLDG 585), Information Technology Department (ITD) and our Navy Radio Transmitting Facility (NRTF) Niscemi. Unfortunately, due to inclement weather, an all hands greeting was canceled. But, with today's technology, everyone was fortunate to receive her news via email. In her remarks she stated, "Honor, courage and commitment – always the cornerstone to your ability to live up to the proud heritage of our Navy."

Lastly, Capt. Hamby congratulated NCTS for being selected for three Communications and Information Technology Excellence (CITE) awards, green "C", gold "IT", and red "E" awarded by Commander, Naval Network Space and Operations Command (CNSOC), Washington DC.

Boy Scouts invite Sailors to Court of Honor

Sigonellans are cordially invited to attend A Court of Honor for Boy Scout Troop 53 as we promote a few of Sigonella's young men to their next level in Scouting, today at 6 p.m. in the NAS I Chapel.

In addition to our Court of Honor, we invite you to attend Scout Sunday on Feb. 2, as we celebrate the commitment each of our young men has made to Scouting. Part of the Scout Law reads "Scouts are Reverent" and they are to "serve God and Country" and on this day we ask that the community band together to celebrate the Scouts and to encourage these young men to continue to live with the same core values we in the Navy proudly serve.

If you are looking for ways to show your commitment to scouting we have many great opportunities for you to get involved in. To learn more about any of these areas you can visit the following website at www.meritbadge.com. If you would like to know more information about Boy Scout Troop 53 please contact our Scout Master, Lou Guarno at lgarno@sig.med.navy.mil.

SUNDAY		MONAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		
<div>COMMUNITY CALENDAR</div>										31	Bowl and Hot Dogs At Tenpins Boy Scout Court of Honor NAS I galley 6 p.m.	February	1	Troop 21 Yard Sale 8 a.m. in Mineo Yard Sale NAS I Key & Essential housing 9 a.m.
2	NASSIG Chapel Services See page 9 for details Groundhog's Day	3	Racquetball Tourney begins	4	St. Agata Festival Call ITT. 624-4396	5	Alcoholics Anonymous Every Mon., Wed. Fri. 5 p.m. Community Building room 203	6	Patti Shopping Call ITT 624-4396	7	Catania by Night Adults only with ITT. 624-4396 Wardrobe Hail/ Farewell 6 p.m.		8	10K Fun Run Registration at 8 a.m. NAS I Fitness Center 624-4483
9	Almond Blossom Fair 1 p.m. depart Take 5 624-5602	10	Alcoholic Anonymous Every Mon., Wed., Fri. 5 p.m. Community Building room 203	11	Teen Supreme Meeting 11 to 11:30 a.m.	12	Fireworks and Catania history Call ITT 624-4396	13	ACT Exam Navy Campus 7:45 a.m. 624-2519	14	TSC Change of Charge 10 a.m. NAS II Gym Valentine's Day		15	Piano Battaglia Ski Trip 7:30 to 6 p.m. Adventures Unlimited 624-4271/3718
16	Horseback Riding 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. depart Take 5 624-5602	17	Washington's Birthday	18	Alcoholics Anonymous Every Tuesday 7 p.m. Community Building room 203	19	San Corrado Festival Call ITT 624-43	20	Photo Safari Meeting 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. 347-722-2705 ask for Marco	21	Panini Run 8 to 10 p.m. Call Liberty 624-5187		22	Hike of the Month Hike Mt. Etna depart NAS I 8:30 a.m. 624-5271
23	Liturgical Service See page 8 for details	24		25		26	Protestant Bible Study 4:45 p.m. NAS II Chapel 624-4295	27	Acireale City and Carnevale Call ITT 624-4396	28	Catania Shopping Call ITT 624-4396		29	



By Alberto Lunetta
Signature Staff

Sant'Agatha Festival to be held in Catania

“Cittadini, viva Sant’Agata!” (Townspeople, long live St. Agatha!). This is what thousands of devotees scream annually as they participate in the processions throughout the streets of Catania from Feb. 3 through 5 to express passion, gratitude and devotion to their beloved patron saint.

While attending the processions, you’ll be impressed with the size of the candles that *divoti* (devotees) carry on their shoulders as votive offerings.

Typically, the saint is invoked in moments of pain, danger, sickness and tension. Carrying *ceri* (candles) in procession is usually a lifelong practice. Devotees usually decide how heavy the candle should be and for how long they will carry it.

Most of these pilgrims wear the traditional *sacco* (tunic), women in green and men in white. Devotees also wear a black *scuzziata* (skullcap), a handkerchief and gloves. According to one tradition, the custom of wearing the *sacco* symbolizes the nightdress that the Catanians wore when they welcomed Saint Agatha’s return from Turkey on Aug. 17, 1126.

As it occurred during the night, people swarmed into the streets barefoot in their nightclothes. Historic chronicles tell that it was a great feast for the Catania community whose residents waived white handkerchiefs to show their enthusiasm.

Yet, according to another tradition, this white garment actually symbolizes a sackcloth or penitential dress meaning purity. In the 16th century, devotees used to attend the celebrations barefoot and wearing only briefs while women, who were only allowed to participate as onlookers, were required to wear a rough cloth with one opening to respect public decency.

Over the centuries, Saint Agatha has been invoked several times against the eruptions of the volcano Mt. Etna, and elsewhere against fire and lightning.

One of the most prodigious miracles that are ascribed to her occurred in the year 252 A.D., one year after her death. As a violent Etna eruption threatened the city,

Catanians invoked the help of St. Agatha by laying her veil (called *limpia*), which according to a legend covered her head as she was being rolled over hot coals during her martyrdom, over the lava. Right after, the miracle happened and the flow stopped.

Life of Saint Agatha

According to tradition, St. Agatha was born into a wealthy Sicilian family in Catania in 231 AD. She was a virtuous young woman leading a pure and holy life.

When she refused to marry Quintianus, a Roman governor who brutally persecuted Christians, he had her arrested and tortured. She also suffered the cruel indignity of having her breasts cut off, a detail that has been often depicted in Christian medieval paintings. Afterward, Agatha was consigned to prison where a prodigious event occurred as St. Peter appeared to her in a dazzling light and healed all her torture wounds.

Then, Quintianus ordered that Agatha would be cast into a fiery furnace and burned to death. But while she was burning alive a violent earthquake struck Catania.

This natural disaster was welcomed by the Catanians as a sign of God who wanted the tortures inflicted on Agatha to be over. Thus, a riot broke out in the city forcing Quintianus to stop the execution.

Eventually, Agatha was taken back to her prison where she soon died. It was Feb. 5, 251 AD. Later on the same day, the evil Quintianus, who was on the run because he feared the riot, drowned in the river Simeto.

Festival Schedule

Here are some of the must-see events of this vivid and heartfelt religious festival that lasts over a month. On Feb. 3, celebrations begin with Holy Mass celebrated at the Cathedral at 7:30 a.m.

Later at noon., a solemn procession called “The offering of the wax” leaves from the Church of St. Agata “*Alla fornace*” toward the Cathedral.

Candelore (tall wax candles surrounded by a heavy candelabrum-shaped gilded wooden structure and decorated with statues depicting angels, saints, pennons and flowers) representing some local guilds head the procession. Each *candelora* is carried on the shoulders of eight to 12 people.

In the past, they illuminated the passage of the procession. But through the centuries their dimensions became so bulky that a person alone could not carry their weight anymore. During the processions, the *candelore* stop every once in a while and “compete” among them by performing the *annacata*, a series of swaying moves.

Parades of the city’s banners, civilian and military officials will also follow the procession followed by the historic *Carrozzi du sinatu* (18th century Catania Senate Carriages). The celebration day will end in the evening with a fireworks show in piazza Duomo.

On Feb. 4, the traditional “Dawn Holy Mass” is celebrated at 6 a.m. at the Cathedral. It is one of the most intense and evocative moments of the festival.

The *Cammaredde* that is small room located inside the Cathedral, where the relics and the Saint Agata simulacrum are permanently kept, is opened before a crowd of moved and applauding devotees.

Later, a procession, during which the *Vara*, a 16-foot-long richly decorated silver carriage on which the Saint Agata bust and relics are carried, will begin its tour throughout the city at 7 a.m. It will leave from *Porta Uzeda* (Uzeda gate) in piazza Duomo where the Catania Archbishop will perform the offering of a candle. In the late afternoon at 6 p.m., the tour starts again from piazza San Domenico (in via Plebiscito) and ends in piazza Duomo through Porta Uzeda.

On Feb. 5, a solemn holy mass is celebrated at the cathedral at 10:30 a.m. Later at 5:30 p.m., the most spectacular Saint Agatha procession will leave from piazza Duomo at 5:30 p.m. Crossing via Etnea it will move ahead up toward piazza Cavour.

The procession, which goes on all night long, reaches its climax when it arrives at the slope of via San Giuliano on its way back to piazza Duomo around 5 a.m. on Feb. 6. Running fast, devotees pull the Saint carriage up to via San Giuliano.

It is a spectacular and dangerous proof of physical strength and resistance that could only be performed by



Photo courtesy of Catania Tourist Office

St. Agatha celebrations are set in Catania from Feb. 3 through 5. This annual vivid festival, which traditionally attracts over a million people to the streets of the city, features processions, parades, solemn Holy Masses and fairs. For the occasion, festival attendees will get the chance to see the newly restyled Elephant Square.

young powerful devotees as the *Vara* weighs several tons. Driven by devotion, thousands of people stay up until dawn to participate in this unique moment.

At the end of the hard climb, the crowd releases the tension with a liberating thunderous applause. Eventually, the saint is brought back to the Cathedral.

Complementing the festival, a fair will be set up from Jan. 31 through Feb. 5 inside the Catania port.

Traditional pastries

While you attend the festival, don’t forget to linger in the *pasticceria* (pastry shops) to taste the traditional *Olivette di Sant’Agata* (Saint Agatha’s small olives) and the traditional *torrone* (nougat). These olive-shaped almond sweets are associated with Saint Agatha because of an episode that occurred during her life.

As legend holds, Agatha was on her way to stand trial before Quintianus, when she bent to tie her sandal. As she did that, an olive tree miraculously sprouted where she had stepped. After St. Agatha’s death, these olives were preserved as relics. *Olivettes* can also be covered with chocolate.

Word Find

State Capitals

Y W E M J V Y A C S H V S H A A A Y Q B N M Y K S

H T R L O S I T I H E O A A U N T E F V O V T C U

G K I H L P P L I G A R N S N I E E N N J Y I O B

I S Y C M I O R U C R R T O C T I L T A V G C R M

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K N O S K C A J T P U D N O M H C I R U M I N E A

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A E M D M S L R N A K W K V U T R U D W N E I N C

R V H W U T A P H O E N I X J R R I G O W N N E K

F O L K H V H U A E N U J N E P S A T U L C G D B

I D I F H F A Q V W S K S I A O M N H D S E R M O

E J N P O S S J V J D I P C N F E Q B G G T J U S

V L C E F X S M O N T G O M E R Y T O P E K A D T

N G O R H Q E I S Y X F J B T K P E R D S G I O O

D V L A L B E N S F O E R Q L G K X P J V S C C N

X V N D F I R Q U O J Q X D W M N E M P J C O J N

ALBANY

ANNAPOLIS

ATLANTA

AUGUSTA

AUSTIN

BATON ROUGE

BISMARCK

BOISE

BOSTON

CARSON CITY

CHARLESTON

CHEYENNE

COLUMBIA

COLUMBUS

~~CONCORD~~

DENVER

DES MOINES

DOVER

FRANKFORT

HARRISBURG

HARTFORD

HELENA

HONOLULU

INDIANAPOLIS

JACKSON

JEFFERSON CITY

JUNEAU

LANSING

LINCOLN

LITTLE ROCK

MADISON

MONTGOMERY

MONTPELLIER

NASHVILLE

OKLAHOMA CITY

OLYMPIA

PHOENIX

PIERRE

PROVIDENCE

RALEIGH

RICHMOND

SACRAMENTO

SALEM

SALT LAKE CITY

SANTA FE

SPRINGFIELD

ST PAUL

TALLAHASSEE

TOPEKA

TRENTON

Shout

DoDDs students talk about what’s happening in the community

LIBERTY CITY

Cent

Piazza Armerina
By Ralph Cuenca

On Jan. 16, the 7th and 8th graders in Mrs. Nance’s art class and Mr. Minning’s music class took a field trip to Piazza Armerina. I was excited on the bus thinking about what it would look like. I knew there would be mosaics inside, since our lesson was about them.

Finally, we reached the piazza. It looked just like I thought. It was so ancient and interesting. I was eager to see what was inside. The moment I got in, I was so amazed with all the mosaics. They were really fascinating and different from what I imagined. I thought there would be artwork in big frames hanging on the walls, but what I saw were the mosaics right down on the floors.

The mosaics showed lots of pictures of animals and hunters. They also showed some pictures about mythology. The mosaics’ colors looked dull, I thought maybe because they were made a long time ago. There were lots of rooms including the hunting lodge, a long courtyard, a gym, and baths.

Seeing the amazing mosaics made me curious and left me wanting to know more about Piazza Armerina. I searched for some information on-line and I found out that Piazza Armerina is famous all over the world for the old Roman villa, especially for the mosaics of big game hunting.

Some people think the piazza was owned by a wealthy importer of African animals that were used in Roman games.

The villa’s famed mosaic floors were probably made by African master craftsmen. What is for sure is that they are some of the largest and most impressive mosaics surviving from antiquity.

I’m sure people who saw the marvelous mosaics were stunned and amazed like I was, and still am now.

Creative Connections

Creative Connections is a week long intensive visual and performing arts seminar sponsored by Department of Defense Dependent School Europe each year in Oberwesel am Rhein, Germany from Feb. 23 to 28. The purpose of this seminar is to provide an opportunity for intensive study to talented students who have a high potential and interest in the arts.

Students must apply and have teacher recommendations to be considered. This year, six Sigonella high school students were selected to attend this prestigious event.

Carmen Montopoli will be attending Beyond “Hum-Drum” where she will learn playing techniques for a variety of percussion instruments. Lou Limon will attend Melodies, Harmonies and Arrangements where he will explore playing melodies, building harmonies and creating arrangements to accompany melodies.

Rita Anderson will be performing music from the genre of musical theater from 1945 to the present and taught by Ms. Lynn Soeby. Adriana Zyskowski will attend the Movement, Concepts, and Choreography workshop, which focuses on the importance of dance as a means of communicating an idea or concept.

Kathleen Filipinas will attend the Mixed Media workshop where various wet and dry media will be explored in self-portrait studies, still life and a collaborative project. Whitney Morell is one of only four students who will use digital video cameras and state of the art software to produce daily presentations and a compilation of the week’s activities for future arts promotions. Mr. Lionel Crenshaw will also attend as the Dean of Men.

The students will spend over seven hours a day studying in their respective workshops. Each day ends with a “Day in Review” video production. Highlights of the evening activities include a talent show and time to experiment in other classes being held during the week.

The week culminates in an Art Exhibit and Performance highlighting the students’ achievements.

Message from the Mediterranean Superintendent
Shared responsibility for Student Achievement:
Dr. Thomas Ellinger

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 provides statutory provisions for parental involvement in schools. It supplies tools that can increase student achievement through parental involvement.

The use of learning compacts or parental pledges is required in all public schools receiving Title I funds affecting over half of the nation’s public school children. What are learning compacts? The U.S. Department of Education describes a learning compact or pledge in the following way:

A voluntary agreement between the home and the school. The agreement can define goals, expectations and shared responsibilities of schools and parents as equal partners for student learning.

Parents commit, for example, to setting aside reading time, seeing that homework is completed, monitoring television viewing, and making sure that children get to bed and school on time. Schools must agree to provide children with every opportunity to learn in a supportive, drug and violence-free environment. The U.S. Department of

Education research shows that schools with properly implemented learning compacts raise student achievement higher than at similar schools without pledges. Pledges have a greater impact on student learning than other types of home school interactions. Principals of schools with pledges report greater family involvement in homework and more parents reading with children at home.

Best of all, schools with the greatest needs seem to benefit the most. The website www.projectapplessed.org <<http://www.projectapplessed.org>> is an award-winning clearinghouse of strategic information about parental involvement.

I invite each of our schools, the School Advisory Committees, our PTSA’s, and our Commands to form partnerships and assist us in support of Goal 4 of our Community Strategic Plan for developing a network of partnerships that support highest Student Achievement.

TRIVIA

How many paintings did Vincent van Gogh sell while he was alive?

What is the driest place in the world? (ie. never had a day of rain ever recorded)

What is the number one rented movie in history?

Which gun company made the weapon that killed Abraham Lincoln?

What baseball position is the Cy Young Award given?

(Answers on page 8)

Movie Connection

MWR's Theater Schedule

Friday, Jan. 31

5:30 p.m.

The Emperor's Club (PG-13)

8 p.m.

Empire (R) **

10 p.m.

Analyze That (R)

Saturday, Feb. 1

11 a.m.

Spirited Away (PG)

2 p.m.

The Santa Clause 2 (G) *

4:30 p.m.

Extreme Ops (PG-13)

7 p.m.

Antwone Fisher (PG-13)

9:30 p.m.

Friday After Next (R)

Sunday, Feb. 2

1 p.m.

Chamber of Secrets (PG)

3:30 p.m.

8 Crazy Nights (PG-13) **

6 p.m.

The Two Towers (PG-13)

Monday, Feb. 3

5:30 p.m.

Chamber of Secrets (PG)

8 p.m.

Empire (R)

Tuesday, Feb. 4

5:30 p.m.

8 Mile (R)

8 p.m.

Friday After Next (R)

Wednesday, Feb. 5

5:30 p.m.

Extreme Ops (PG-13)

8 p.m.

Analyze That (R)

Thursday, Feb. 6

5:30 p.m.

Chamber of Secrets (PG) *

8 p.m.

8 Mile (R) *

Friday, Feb. 7

5:30 p.m.

Maid in Manhattan (PG-13)

8 p.m.

Star Trek: Nemesis (PG-13) **

10:30 p.m.

Empire (R)

*** Future Re-release **Sneak Preview *Last Showing

(All times and movies are subject to change. For more information on the schedule, call the movie hotline at

Providing services to military for over 70 years



Joni Consoli, Sigonella's Navy Federal Credit Union's Manager, helped celebrate its 70th birthday with cake, cookies and giveaways.

By AN Michelle Watkins
Signature Staff

Composed of the Department of the Navy military and civilian personnel and their families, Navy Federal Credit Union was established in 1933 under the Federal Credit Union Act. Since then, Navy Federal continues to grow and expand their services to the military community. For over 70 years Navy Federal, now the world's largest credit union, has provided services such as loans, money orders, savings bonds and refinancing. Once a member of Navy Federal, you are entitled to use the services offered as long as you maintain the minimum requirements for membership; even if you leave the military,

change employers, move, retire or get married. "Navy Federal has been in existence for 70 years because of our members," stated Joni Consoli, Manager of Sigonella Member Service Center. In Sigonella, approximately 4,600 people visit and are members of Navy Federal. As a member of Navy Federal you can enjoy the perks and benefits, such as receiving life savings insurance program free of charge. The amount of insurance, which can go up to \$2000, is based on several factors. They include age at time of death and combined share savings balances. The primary goal and mission of Navy Federal is to provide a safe place to save money and to build a financial foundation for members said Consoli. They also work hard to limit the amount of

service fees that could be accumulated from teller to bank fees. "If you compare our interest rates to other banks you will find that our loans are lower and you can rest assured your funds are insured," commented Consoli. Members and their families can have the peace of mind of keeping the same bank whenever they change duty stations, rather than add the worry of finding a new bank to the long list of to dos they have each time they move. They can also enjoy the conveniences of knowing that every duty station will have a Navy Federal organization. Since the establishment of Navy Federal, many changes have been made throughout the years, such as being able to pay bills electronically, transfer money and check accounts online. These changes are just a few of the many that save members time and hassle. Members stationed in Sigonella can look forward to yet one more change, a second ATM coming to NAS I Food Court soon. Navy Federal has grown from the tiny establishment that started in the Washington Navy Yard from an office of a few civilians and Navy officers to 91 offices worldwide and over 6,000 employees. Since then service has expanded to what Navy Federal is today.



NASSIG Worship Opportunities

- Catholic Mass**
Saturday 5 p.m. Chapel (NAS I)
Sunday 9 a.m. Chapel (NAS I)
Sunday 9 a.m. in Italian 41st Stormo Chapel (NAS II)
Sunday 11 a.m. Community Center (Mineo)
- Protestant Worship**
Sunday 9 a.m. Community Center (Mineo)
Sunday 9 a.m. Liturgical Service (NAS II)
Sunday 11 a.m. Chapel (NAS I)
- Latter Day Saints**
Sunday 1 p.m. Chapel (NAS I)
- Church of Christ**
Sunday 3:30 p.m. Chapel (NAS I)
- Weekdays**
Daily Catholic Mass 11:30 a.m. (NAS I & II)
Wednesday Protestant Bible Study 4:45 p.m. (NAS II Chapel)
For more details, call 624-4295 or 624-2947.

Trivia Answers

- 1) One 2) Calama, Chile
3) E.T. 4) Deringer
5) Pitcher

Pilot front page



Italian Navy Ens. Daniela Giordano with Italian Sea-King helicopters in background.

Italian military recruiting policy. But it is not the only organizational change. In 2000, the Italian Parliament has also approved a law for abolishing the *servizio di leva* (draft) by 2007 and the introduction of contract service in the military that consists of enlisting only professional soldiers. In April 2000, Giordano, who was serving at that time with the *Polizia di Stato* (State Police) as a patrolman in Milan, applied to become a pilot in the Navy. She eventually obtained the job passing difficult tests and competing with thousands of female candidates from all over Italy. "My interest in the Navy began at an early age as I grew up in Taranto, a city in Apulia, that hosts a strategic Navy base. I became intrigued with a military career watching the helicopters flying over the port and ships setting off to far away places," Giordano said. Like all Italian Navy student aviators, Giordano began her career under the guidance of the U.S. Navy as she attended about 21 months of flight training at Naval Air Station (NAS) Corpus Christi, Texas and NAS Whiting Field, Milton, Fla. She received primary flight training in T-34C (single-engine, propeller-driven aircraft), and T-44A King Air (twin turbo propeller). Upon completion of basic flight training, she was sent to Helicopter Training Squadron 8 (HT-8) aboard NAS Whiting Field for advanced training in TH-57C Sea Ranger helicopter.

Giordano eventually received her "Wings of Gold" at Whiting Field and she was also awarded the "Commodore's List Certificate" while she was at NAS Corpus Christi. "I loved my training period in the States. Thanks to my American roommate I learned a lot about the American culture and way of life," Giordano said. As reported in a recent Navy News Stand article, Helicopter Training Squadron 8 (HT-8) Commanding Officer Cmdr. Chip Laingen was proud to have winged the first female Navy pilot in Italian military history. "I flew with Ensign Giordano, and she is an excellent pilot," said Laingen. Giordano has always been fascinated by the military world. "I take pride in my work. I admire the lifestyle and discipline of professional military organizations. I love putting my uniform on every morning, the family atmosphere of the Navy and the community spirit among its people," said Giordano. Maristaeli commanding officer, Capt. Massimo Messina says it's been quite a smooth transition. "At first there was some curiosity. We made some logistic adjustments on base to accommodate Giordano," Messina said. "All Italian Navy pilots train in America so they are used to working with female pilots. Consequently, to me she is just like the other pilots," Messina added. Maristaeli Navy base's mission is to perform different air-sea operational duties such as search and rescue missions, medical service emergencies, law enforcement missions, coast patrols, transfers of residents of smaller islands during harsh weather conditions, assisting during major fires in the forest and other civil protection requirements. Yet, the base is the only Italian Navy training center for pilots and aircraft mechanics. Additionally, it is the only training area Italy-wide where aircrews can qualify as "Limited Combat Ready." The base, which was established in 1963 which hosts about 500 service members and it is home to two helicopter squadrons operating AB 212 ASW and SH3D helicopters. Giordano is currently undergoing training to fly SH3D Sea King helicopters. She is very motivated and determined. "I hope that all these interviews would contribute to better advertise the Navy pilot career," said Giordano.



Italian Navy Capt. Massimo Messina, Maristadi Naval Air base.

Museum front page

Next comes a re-creation of an air raid shelter. Here the visitor sits in darkness and claustrophobia while imagining what the reality must have been like as the sound of bombs dropping and striking escalates. The visitor exits the shelter and enters a re-creation of the same quaint village after it's been smashed by Allied bombs and infantry. In a battle of superpowers, the powerless suffered most. "It was incredibly emotional," said Capt. Tim Davison, NAS Sigonella Commanding Officer, who represented the U.S. military at the museum's grand opening. "It shows through the tragedy of war how similar our cultures are. For a short period of time we had a political disagreement and (the museum) shows how it hurt the common people." Not only villagers suffered. The major Sicilian cities, including Catania, were also bombed in order to dislodge the stubborn Nazi forces. The museum features still photographs and footage of the bombing of Catania Etnea and its aftermath, including bombed-out via. There are also a number of static displays, featuring the memorabilia, weapons and uniforms of the combatants. Collector Giovanni Carabalone, who donated many of the uniforms and organized the displays said that collecting is like never growing up. "When we were kids, we played with G.I. Joes and when we grew up we played with bigger toys." Carabalone said that the uniforms were found at fairs and flea markets, on the Internet, with the families of soldiers and other collectors. He said that collecting World War II memorabilia has two levels. "First, collecting is fun. But what the exhibits say is that war is not good. It brings death and destruction." An innovative feature of the museum is the animated map of *Operation Husky*. As a digital calendar displays the accelerated date and time, symbols representing Allied and Axis forces in Sicily move across the map. American and British troop symbols chase their German counterparts across the Sicilian landscape to Messina and mainland Italy. The second floor of the museum shows details of the major battles of Operation Husky, including the Battle of Catania, during which much of the city center was damaged. Also on the second floor is an exhibit of life-sized wax figures of the leaders of the major powers during the Second World War, featuring Roosevelt, Churchill, Hitler and Mussolini and Italian King Vittorio Emanuele III. The Historical Museum of the Invasion of Sicily shows the contributions made of our military forefathers and shows what a strong alliance can do when faced with a great threat. "(The museum) is a witness to what happened," said Col. Giorgio Russo, Commanding Officer of the 41st Stormo of the Italian Air Force, who also attended the grand opening. "It is a proof of how terrible war is and how it can destroy everything. It is important to work together."

"I became intrigued with a military career watching the helicopters flying over the port..."
— Ens. Daniela Giordano